

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An etching method for etching an etching target film formed on an SiO₂ film placed inside an airtight processing chamber, the method comprising:

introducing a processing gas into said airtight processing chamber, wherein said processing gas contains N₂ and at least one of C₄F₈ and CF₄;

generating a plasma in said airtight processing chamber for etching said etching target film, and

etching an organic ~~target~~ film containing Si formed on the SiO₂ film to the point until the SiO₂ film is exposed, wherein a resist is used as a mask on said etching target film and the etching process ceases once the SiO₂ is exposed.

2. (Previously Presented) An etching method according to claim 1, wherein said organic film containing Si is constituted of SiO₂ containing C and H.

3. (Previously Presented) An etching method according to claim 1, wherein the dielectric constant of said organic film containing Si is equal to or lower than 3.0.

4. (Previously Presented) An etching method according to claim 1, wherein said organic target film containing Si is an organic polysiloxane film.

5. (Previously Presented) An etching method according to claim 1, wherein said processing gas further contains Ar.

Claims 6-13 (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) An etching method for etching an etching target film formed on an SiO₂ film placed inside an airtight processing chamber, the method comprising:

introducing a processing gas into said airtight processing chamber, wherein said processing gas contains at least CF₄ and N₂, wherein the flow rate ratio of CF₄ and N₂ in said processing gas is essentially set within a range of $1 \leq (\text{N}_2 \text{ flow rate} / \text{CF}_4 \text{ flow rate}) \leq 4$;

generating a plasma in said airtight processing chamber for etching said etching target film, and

etching an organic ~~target~~ film containing Si formed on the SiO₂ film to the point until the SiO₂ film is exposed, wherein a resist is used as a mask on said etching target film and the etching process ceases once the SiO₂ is exposed.

Claims 15 -17 (Cancelled)